RECYCLING VEHICLES

In response to environmental concerns, American automakers are promoting the use of recycled materials.

More than 80 percent of the total weight from a vehicle can be recycled. The materials include aluminum, iron, and steel. The remaining 20 percent is called shredder residue and it is disposed in landfills.

There are four steps in the recycling process:

* Dismantling—Usable parts and components, such as batteries, wheels, and fenders, are removed.
* Crushing—The vehicle is crushed.
* Shredding—The vehicle is shredded into pieces about the size of a softball, and the shredder residue is separated from the reusable metals.
* Resource recovery—The metals are re-melted by the mills.

The automakers are also researching how they can improve the recyclability of future cars. They continue to investigate ways to recycle the shredder residue, which includes plastics, glass, fabric, wood, and paper.